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House of Representatives

State of South Carolina

David J. Mack III

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Committee:

Labor, Commerce and Industry

November 10, 2009

Charles Terreni
Chef Clerk and Administrator
Public Service Commission of SC
101 Executive Center Dr., Ste. 100
Columbia, SC 29210

Dear Mr. Terreni:

I have seen some of the newspaper ads and heard about the PSC's decision to deny TracFone Wireless's request to provide free cell phones and wireless service to the people of South Carolina. The neediest citizens of our state benefit from the Lifeline program, administered by the federal government. I do not understand why the PSC would refuse to benefit these needy consumers when it is a free service and does not cost our taxpayers.

The need is clear. Less than 10% of this state's low income households receive Lifeline benefits now. With 90% of all the federally-defined poor in our state unconnected to the Lifeline program, this would be a large benefit to these people and for our state.

I understand and respect the work of the state's Public Service Commission. I know many of the issues you deal with are highly technical in nature. But I urge you to re-think this access issue in light of the apparent statewide need. TracFone seems willing to commit significant resources to operate in our state. They have already done so in a number of neighboring states. I hope that the SC PSC can find a way to expand access to free wireless phones and free wireless service to low income South Carolinians, and find a way to find a suitably appease all the parties involved. Our poorest citizens will be the winners if you can.

Thank you for your consideration of this inquiry.

Sincerely,

Rep. David Mack

cc: C. Dukes Scott, Exec. Director, SC Office of Regulatory Staff
& members of Public Utilities Review Committee

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